

# Employee FRONTLINE

A newsletter from the WA State Employee Assistance Program



## Sure-Fire New Year's Resolution Tip

One university study found 45 percent of people attempt New Year's resolutions, but only 8 percent achieve their goal.\* The most powerful strategy to help ensure success is using fear of confrontation by others if you don't succeed. You're hardwired to respond to pain and fear and avoid these threats to a greater degree than you are motivated by a pleasurable vision of success. Both are useful, but together they supercharge motivation. The proof of this assertion lies in any resistance you may feel this minute just thinking about it. If failure is not an option, here's the way to go: Identify 10 to 20 people (not family members) you know who won't let you off the hook. Commit to the goal in writing and distribute a copy to each person, being sure to include a completion date. Now you're motivated! (\*[StatisticBrain.com](http://StatisticBrain.com))

## Getting Along with Your Coworker

Does a fresh start in 2014 with a coworker with whom you were in conflict in 2013 sound like a good idea? Repairing the relationship may improve your mood, bring workplace fun back, and prevent you from going home feeling tired and tense. Being straightforward and admitting it's your fault is the most powerful fix-up strategy, along with expressing the desire to start over. Before rejecting this idea, realize most conflicts are fueled by both parties. Admitting fault can "reboot" your relationship. You may get an almost immediate reciprocation with instant relief—you will both feel as though you're freed from a cloud of tension. When you do this, you'll need to be sincere and not allude to your coworker's contribution to the problem. Implementing this idea may have you looking forward to a better year.



## Relaxation Quiz

Do you interfere with your ability to relax without knowing it? Consider the following:

- 1) You combine attempts to relax with work-related activities.
- 2) You feel guilty when you are trying to relax.
- 3) You feel annoyed by family members who want you to participate in relaxation events with them.
- 4) You feel unproductive, bored, or fidgety when you try to relax.
- 5) You often quit early when participating in any relaxation period or event.
- 6) When you relax, you do so with office work by your side.
- 7) Work feels rewarding, and the idea of needing to relax feels imposing.

If you answered "yes" to at least three of these questions, consider understanding more about the need to include meaningful relaxation in your life.

## Check Your Tech-Etiquette

How's your cell phone etiquette? Ninety percent of people surveyed by Intel insisted serious improvement is needed in people's technology manners. Rule #1 is being aware of your use of technology when you are around others. Be with them, not the technology. Nearly all cell phone etiquette tips flow from this adage. We learn to keep elbows off the table growing up. Is it time to begin to instill text, chat, and snap manners? For a list of technology social issues and etiquette advice, try <http://www.emilypost.com/technology>.

Source: [www.etiquettedaily.com](http://www.etiquettedaily.com) (search "Intel Study")

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## Cybersecurity and You



The data breach of 40 million consumer credit cards at Target Corporation highlights the growing problem of cybercrime. Cybercriminals don't use manual guesses to discover your log-in info and password. They use computer programs.

Trustwave, a company that consults on cybersecurity, says the most commonly stolen passwords are the ones that are easily guessed. Hackers also recently stole 2 million website log-in credentials at Facebook, Google, and Twitter. Most stolen records had really easy passwords, like 123456. Are you using a simple, easy-to-crack password? Perhaps a password change is in order. Source: [Trustwave.com](http://Trustwave.com)

## Staying Safe: Practice Situational Awareness

Situational awareness refers to staying aware of your surroundings to avoid becoming a victim of a "crime of opportunity." Traveling on a subway, dropping a child off at school, walking in a parking garage, or carrying purchases to your car can present an opportunity for a mugging, robbery, assault, theft, or carjacking. Your intuition and senses are your best tools for perceiving threats so you can act decisively should danger present itself. Police officers are trained in situational awareness, and like them, you can participate in exercises to increase your situational awareness skills. Take a few moments each day to notice details relating to people and things in your environment that typically escape your attention. Over time, this can improve your ability to naturally be more observant, thereby reducing your risk of becoming a victim of a crime of opportunity.



## Can Newlyweds Predict the Future?



Newlyweds may know at a gut level whether they'll be happily married in the future. Researchers surveyed 135 couples to discover their "gut level" responses to questions that revealed their underlying feelings about each other. In many cases these views differed from the more glowing view and beliefs they shared with others. Research sought to discover which beliefs better predicted marital happiness. Gut-level belief won out as being a better predictor of future marital happiness. The message is: trust your gut. Consider relationship counseling early when it may be more effective if your gut tells you issues are on the horizon. Source: <http://news.fsu.edu> (search: "newlyweds")

## How to Make a Decision

Since decisions can have life-changing consequences, it's worth studying the mechanics of how to make a good one. There's lots of advice out there, but most tough decision making involves common "pieces" in the process. They include weighing the information and the choices, examining potential outcomes, paying attention to your feelings and your instincts as you go through the process, and stepping away from the pressure or urgency (if possible) to ensure that it is not interfering with making a good choice. To gain better control over information, pressure, choices, and risks, give each element its own mini-examination. Focus on information, what's known, and what else can be known. Focus on choices. Consider their outcomes—expected and unexpected, short term and long term—and the risks and value of each choice. Consider feelings and what they're telling you. Ask whether this decision can or should be delayed, or whether it's best to decide now. If all these steps still have you stumped, try the following exercise. Fill in the blank: "If I did know what I should do, it would be \_\_\_\_\_." Engaging in this mental prompt exercise can tap into a deeper awareness of what the decision should be. Deep down, you may really know. Try this free online decision-making program at [www.helpmydecision.com](http://www.helpmydecision.com). You'll become a decision-making wiz, have fun, and see the decision-making process in action.

